

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
2016 Biennial Review of Telecommunications Regulations)	IB Docket No. 16-131
)	
Rule Parts Containing Regulations)	
Administered by the International Bureau (IB))	

**COMMENTS OF
THE UNITED STATES TELECOM ASSOCIATION**

The United States Telecom Association (USTelecom)¹ submits these comments in response to the Federal Communications Commission’s (Commission) invitation to provide comments as to what regulations administered by the International Bureau (IB) should be modified or repealed as part of the 2016 biennial review. USTelecom has identified at least one area that is ripe for reconsideration by the IB.

As part of the Biennial Review, the International Bureau should consider further streamlining of the international reporting requirements under Section 43.62. The goal of such streamlining is both to ensure the necessity of collecting the data to advance specific International Bureau responsibilities, and also to ensure that the methodology is optimally efficient so that the benefits to public interest goals clearly outweigh an accurate analysis of the burdens on industry to prepare the data.

USTelecom greatly appreciates the improvements in these regulations made in the

¹ USTelecom is the premier trade association representing service providers and suppliers for the telecom industry. Its diverse member base ranges from large publicly traded communications corporations to small companies and cooperatives – all providing advanced communications service to both urban and rural markets.

rulemaking on this issue initiated in April 2004² and concluded in January 2013,³ and urges the Bureau to build on the success of that effort by conducting a fresh review of the effectiveness and relevance of the current reporting regime in today's US international market.

Although streamlined and improved in recent years, the international reporting requirements have their origin in the highly-regulated monopoly circuit-switched industry of many decades ago. In contrast, today's US international market is highly competitive and almost completely deregulated, with almost *two thousand* US providers of international calling services, including many unregulated (and some very substantial) US providers of international VoIP services.⁴ It is a market of abundance rather than scarcity, characterized by increasing output and declining revenues, and with the Commission's international settlements policy still operative on only one international route.⁵

² Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, *Reporting Requirements for U.S. Providers of International Telecommunications Services; Amendment of Part 43 of the Commission's Rules*, 19 FCC Rcd. 6460, FCC 04-70 (released April 12, 2004).

³ Second Report and Order, *Reporting Requirements for U.S. Providers of International Telecommunications Services; Amendment of Part 43 of the Commission's Rules*, 28 FCC Rcd 575, 78 FR 15615, 80 FR 7547, FCC 13-6 (released January 15, 2013) (*2013 IB Reporting Order*).

⁴ See, International Bureau Report, *2014 International Telecommunications Traffic and Revenue Data*, July 2016, at 1 (revenue and traffic data was filed by 1896 US providers of international services, including 354 providers of interconnected VoIP service) (*2014 IB Report*). See also, *2013 IB Reporting Order*, ¶ 77, fn. 123 (citing report that "Skype is the largest provider of cross-border voice communications in the world").

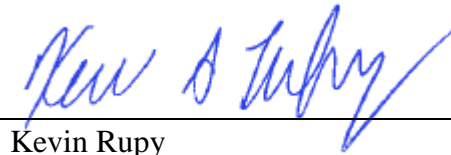
⁵ See, *2014 IB Report*, at 1 ("Although we capture an increased number of providers in this report, the total revenues from U.S. customers decreased compared to previous years. U.S. International Service Providers billed U.S. customers \$3.87 billion for 73.6 billion minutes in 2013. U.S. International Service Providers billed U.S. customers \$3.7 billion for 84.7 minutes in 2014."). See also, Report and Order, *International Settlements Policy Reform*, 27 FCC Rcd. 15521, FCC 12-145 (released November 29, 2012) (removing the international settlements policy from all remaining routes except the US-Cuba route).

Regardless of these changed circumstances, however, the Commission's legacy international reporting requirements, particularly for international traffic, continue to apply in substantial measure and to impose significant burdens. In this regard, USTelecom understands that providers found that the Commission's estimates in the prior rulemaking of the time required to complete these reports greatly understated the actual time required. To ensure that the costs of this regulation are appropriately justified by resulting benefits, USTelecom requests the inclusion of the international reporting requirements under Section 43.62 in the Biennial Review.

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES TELECOM ASSOCIATION

By:



Kevin Rupy
607 14th Street, NW, Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 326-7300

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